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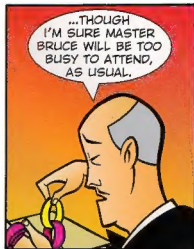
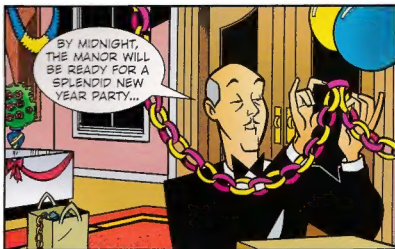
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BATMAN

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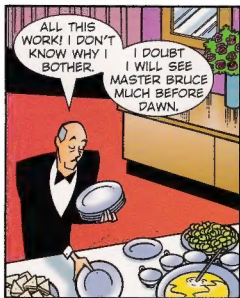
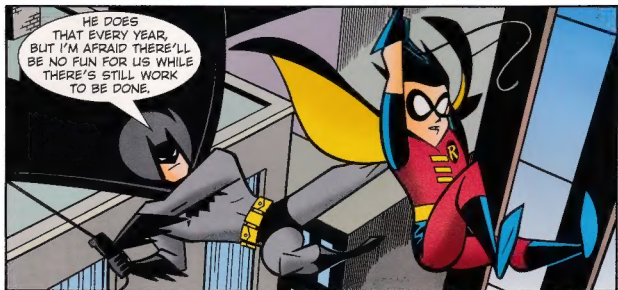
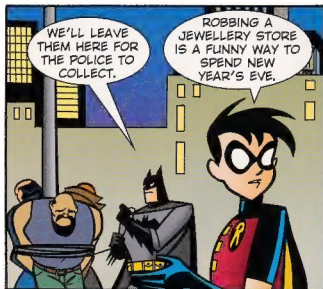
FOR AULD LANG SYNE

It was New Year's Eve, and at Wayne
Manor Alfred was hard at work.

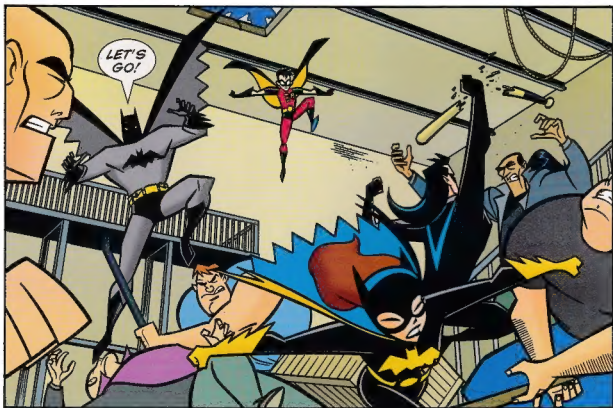
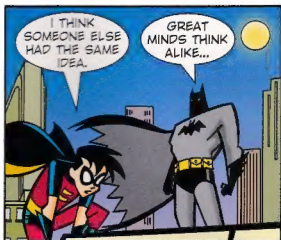
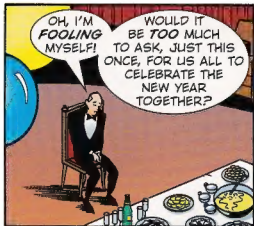


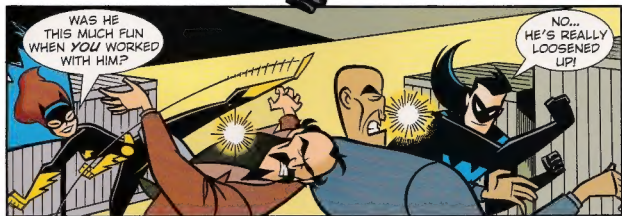
Even as Alfred spoke, Batman and Robin were on the streets of Gotham City, hard at work.

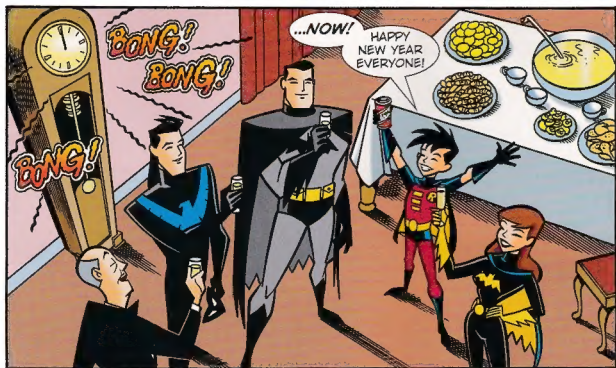












Superman shows Supergirl how the world celebrates its many...

HAPPY NEW YEARS!

Supergirl was a bit confused. "I just about worked out what Christmas was about, and now it's the New Year and everyone seems to be going to a party!"

Superman explained that Supergirl had come to a beautiful, interesting and diverse world. He told her that every nation on Earth had its own language and culture, and every faith had its own beliefs and rituals. He tried to remember the details of as many celebrations as he could, but she seemed more confused than ever.

"It seems as if there's a celebration for something

somewhere in the world every day of the year," she said. Superman laughed.

"There probably is. New Year is celebrated in many different ways all over the world."

Supergirl didn't know how to begin to understand, so she asked Superman what he was doing for New Year. Superman smiled again and offered to take Supergirl on a world tour and show her how all kinds of people would celebrate. After all, this was a very

important New Year — it would be the dawn of a new millennium.

On New Year's Eve, the two super heroes made sure everything was safe and sound in Metropolis and then took to the skies to start their adventure. Superman decided to begin their tour in Australia, as this would be one of the first places to see in the New Year. Here, children were playing on the beach as late night barbecues cooked celebration meals and fireworks filled the skies with glorious colour.

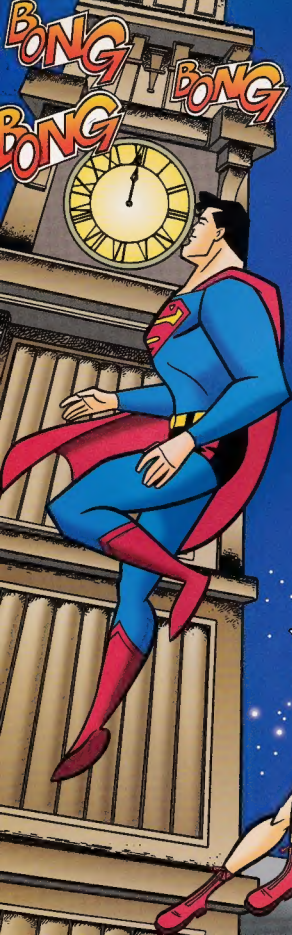
Next, they headed north to Japan, where a festival called Shogatsu had been underway for a week already. Supergirl watched as whole families sat down to a special meal of rice balls and

sausages, called Mochi. Then the two hovered over the great gong that was struck 108 times to wipe away the 108 sins of the past year.

Superman explained that on New Year's Day, everyone would receive New Year cards from their friends and visit the temple to pray for luck in the coming year. Some Japanese would buy a special mask called a Daruma. Then they would blacken one of the eyes of the mask while making a New Year resolution.

As they flew west, over China, Superman told Supergirl about the Chinese New Year, which would happen in a few months. He talked about the men who would climb into a huge dragon suit and dance in the streets. There would be food and decorations, and every year was named after one of twelve animals, including the dragon.





Superman led Supergirl across the Near East. Flying over Israel, they saw lit candles everywhere signifying Chanukah. Superman told Supergirl the story of the Jewish Festival of Lights, of how thousands of years ago, a group of freedom fighters fought on behalf of their people. It isn't really a New Year celebration, but it happens every year around the same time.

He told her of how the Hindus also had a festival of light in October each year, and that both of these religious celebrations involved special songs and prayers, as well as many, many candles.

Soon the pair reached Europe and watched the crowds gathering in London's Trafalgar Square. They heard the huge cheers as Big Ben chimed loudly at midnight.

Supergirl was surprised and delighted by all the different kinds of parties and celebrations that people

enjoyed at New Year. Superman then decided it was time to go on to South America and the Bahamas. In Nassau, the super heroes watched the carnival parade of Junkanoo, complete with elaborate masks and costumes, themed music, and beautiful multicoloured paper banners. The streetlights shone on all the fabulous colours as the crowds danced and sang along with the parade.

Supergirl thought she had seen everything. All kinds of special foods, drink, music, parades and dances. The two heroes followed the coast of South America until Supergirl glanced down to see lights and acres of swaying white on the beaches below. They flew closer, watching the people of Brazil gathering on the ocean's shores, dressed all in white, watching firework displays, eating grapes, and making wishes for the New Year. They gave gifts to Yemanjá, the goddess of the oceans.

When they finally arrived back home in North America, the parties were in full swing. Supergirl was amazed that there were so many traditions associated with New Year, and even different times of the year to celebrate it.

Before going back to Metropolis, Superman took Supergirl to Times Square in New York City.

"And this is how we do it in America," said Superman, as they watched the swaying crowd far below them.

"Well, wherever we are, Happy New Year," she said.

"Happy New Millennium," he replied.



THE END...AND THE BEGINNING!

